

GREEN HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
(Girard Avenue Presbyterian Church)
(Christ Temple Baptist Church)
1617 Girard Avenue
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

HABS PA-6668
PA,51-PHILA,741-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

GREEN HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (Girard Avenue Presbyterian Church) (Christ Temple Baptist Church)

HABS No. PA-6668

- Location:** 1617 W. Girard Avenue, north side between Sixteenth and Seventeenth Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Present Owner/
Occupant:** Christ Temple Baptist Church.
- Present Use:** Vacant, although the Christ Temple congregation meets in the attached parish hall.
- Significance:** Though much altered, Green Hill Presbyterian Church was designed by well-known Philadelphia architect John Notman. Originally situated in a rural environment, it belonged to a group of early institutional buildings in the Penn District north of Girard Avenue and west of Broad Street. Green Hill Presbyterian Church was Notman's first completed design for an entire religious structure in Philadelphia. The church was founded as a "New School" dissenter congregation of the Presbyterian Church and organized by Reverend Thomas Brainerd, the noted New School pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church on Pine Street.¹
- Historian:** James A. Jacobs, Summer 2000.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection:

1847-1848. The Trustees of the Green Hill Presbyterian Church (GHPC) accepted John Notman's second design proposal on November 8, 1847. This proposal became necessary after his first adopted plan was retroactively rejected when John Carver came forward with an offer for a \$10,000 church, presumably less expensive than Notman's first proposal. The cornerstone

¹William P. White and William H. Scott, *The Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Allen, Lane & Scott, 1895) 87, for location of Brainerd's church; *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (New School), 1846, Presbyterian Historical Society (hereafter PHS), 87, for Brainerd's congregation.

was laid on November 15, 1847 and the building was dedicated on December 31, 1848.²

2. Architect and architect-builder:

John Notman. One of the preeminent architects in America in the mid-nineteenth century, Notman was based in Philadelphia and primarily active from the mid 1830s to the mid 1860s. In 1854, celebrated American architect Thomas U. Walter commented: “Mr. Notman is the best Architect in Philadelphia...his works...indicate taste, genius, and practical skill.”³ Notman’s notoriety in nineteenth-century developments in American architecture is broadly founded. While being remembered posthumously “as a designer of churches,” his influence was much greater.⁴ He easily worked within a number of popular idioms from the varied classical revivals to gothic. Notman designed picturesque parks and cemeteries, and the nation’s first psychiatric hospital; he freely employed novel building materials and construction technologies—“Notman was, in sum, one of America’s most innovative architects in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.”⁵

Samuel Gourley. A trustee for the GHPC, Gourley provided the accepted plan, side elevation, section, and most likely the façade elevation, for the church’s alteration and expansion in 1890. Gourley owned a sawing, planing, and turning mill on Ridge Avenue and was responsible for at least the design of GHPC’s changes as well as the design and construction of an 1897 addition to St. Joseph’s Hospital located across Girard Avenue from the GHPC.⁶

An unknown architect provided plans in 1870 for a new “Sabbath School” constructed on the north end of the property, contiguous with the sanctuary building, and obscuring most of the original north (rear) elevation.⁷

3. Original and subsequent owners:

²Trustees’ Minutes (hereafter TM), Green Hill Presbyterian Church (hereafter GHPC), August–September 1847, Volume 1, 1847–1880, PHS, for the plan adoption; “Corner Stone,” *Public Ledger and Daily Transcript* 13 Nov. 1847: (2), for cornerstone; White, 87, for dedication.

³Thomas U. Walter to General R. Patterson, 14 Apr. 1854, tss. from the Thomas U. Walter Letterbooks, Washington, D.C., in Constance Greiff Research Notes, Box 1, for quote.

⁴Constance M. Greiff, *John Notman, Architect, 1810–1865* (Philadelphia: The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, 1979) 14.

⁵*Ibid.*, 14–15.

⁶Building Committee Minutes (hereafter BCM), GHPC, 1 May 1890, PHS, for the extension design attribution; *Gospill’s Philadelphia City Directory* (Philadelphia: James Gospills’ Sons, 1890) 713 and Ernest Hexamer, *Insurance Maps of the City of Philadelphia, Vol. XIV* (Philadelphia: Hexamer & Son, 1890) plate 263, for Gourley’s mill; *Philadelphia Real Estate Record & Builder’s Guide*, vol. 12, issue 21, 26 May 1879, for St. Joseph’s reference.

⁷TM, GHPC, Sep.–Oct. 1870.

The plot of land on which GHPC sits was gifted to Reverend Thomas Brainerd while he was actively soliciting funds for a new Presbyterian church in the vicinity of his temporary residence in the Penn District near Girard College. “By communicating his purpose to several of the property holders near him, he obtained of a fine lot on Girard Avenue for the church, from Charles Macalester, Esq., valued then at \$3000.”⁸ Though an 1859 GHPC history notes the property passed into the ownership of the trustees prior to the start of construction, the deed chronology was actually a bit more convoluted.⁹

The property given to the congregation by Macalester was first conveyed to John A. and Grace Brown, among the largest contributors to the building fund, on April 24, 1848.¹⁰ While the Trustees of the GHPC are named, along with John A. Brown, as the “owner or reputed owner” of the GHPC sanctuary in two mechanics’ lien claims lodged by Notman in 1849, the lot and “improvements thereon” were not fully conveyed to the Trustees until 1851.¹¹

It appears that a tripartite agreement of sorts existed between John A. and Grace Brown, the owners of the lot, John Notman, the architect and possible contractor for the church building, and the Trustees of the GHPC, the patrons of the construction, whereby full ownership of the church would not be conveyed from Brown to the Trustees until Notman had been fully compensated. An October 6, 1851 notation in the Trustees’ Minutes states that “a final settlement with Mr. John Notman [has been made]...and they expect soon to have the Deed in hand for the ground on which the Church stands.”¹² “Premises A” was conveyed by John A. and Grace Brown to the Trustees with no ground rent provisions on November 10, 1851 for \$1.00.¹³

Ownership of the building and grounds technically did not change until 1971, however the formal title of the owners evolved over time. A February 19, 1861 charter alteration changed the owner name from the “Trustees of the Green Hill Presbyterian Church” to the “Green Hill Presbyterian Church.”¹⁴ On April 1, 1923, the congregation merged with the North

⁸M. Brainerd, *Life of Rev. Thomas Brainerd* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1870) 188.

⁹*Manual of the Green Hill Presbyterian Church* (Philadelphia: Henry B. Ashmead, 1859) 18.

¹⁰*Manual*, 18, for Brown contributions; Deed of property, John A. and Grace Brown to the Trustees of the GHPC, 10 Nov. 1851, PHS, for the transaction history.

¹¹*John Notman vs. John A. Brown and the Green Hill Presbyterian Church*, 5 Jan. 1850, December Term 1849, Case Number 51 and *John Notman vs. Trustees of the Green Hill Presbyterian Church*, 11 Jan. 1850, December Term 1849, Case Number 64, Mechanic and Municipal Lien Dockets, 1836–1874 (hereafter Dockets), Archives of the City of Philadelphia and the County of Philadelphia (hereafter ACCP).

¹²TM, GHPC, 6 Oct. 1851.

¹³Deed and transfer file 9N20, plot number 98, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania.

¹⁴Unless otherwise noted, the information about the property owners comes from transfer file 9N20.

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Tenth Street Presbyterian Church, organized in 1849 about six blocks east of GHPC as Penn Presbyterian; the composite congregation met in the GHPC sanctuary and the new name was lodged as the “Girard Avenue Presbyterian Church.”¹⁵ Twenty-three years later, this church merged again with the First Welsh Presbyterian Church and their name became the “Girard Avenue-Welsh Presbyterian Church.”

On June 23, 1971, the building and grounds were sold by the Girard Avenue-Welsh Presbyterian Church to the Trustees of the Presbytery of Philadelphia for \$1.00. This sale coincided with the congregation’s dissolution as the building was sold to the unaffiliated Christ Temple Baptist Church on July 2, 1975. Christ Temple Baptist Church, now known informally as Christ Temple Interdenominational Church, retains current ownership.

4. Original and subsequent occupants:

1848–1922	Green Hill Presbyterian Church
1923–1945	Girard Avenue Presbyterian Church
1946–1971	Girard Avenue-Welsh Presbyterian Church
1975–present	Christ Temple Baptist Church; the congregation permanently moved their services from the sanctuary to the attached auxiliary building in 1997 on account of the structure’s deteriorating state.

5. Builder, contractor, suppliers:

No contractor was named for the original 1847–1848 sanctuary construction. However, two times in 1849 architect John Notman filed claims (for \$2210.36 and \$3210.36) against GHPC for “materials of all descriptions furnished and for builders work done.” These claims suggest in addition to being the building’s architect, Notman had also either served as the contractor for the construction or was acting on behalf of an unnamed contractor in the suits.¹⁶

Contractor: C. D. Supplee, Philadelphia, 1870 Sabbath School building.¹⁷ It is uncertain whether this named contractor is or related to Davis E. Supplee, the builder of the Ridge Avenue Farmers’ Market (1875) which was located only a few blocks west, just south of Girard Avenue.

¹⁵Kenneth A. Hammonds, *Historical Directory of Presbyterian Churches and Presbyteries of Greater Philadelphia, Related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Its Antecedents, 1690–1990* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society) 79, for Penn Presbyterian.

¹⁶*Notman vs. John A. Brown and GHPC*, and *Notman vs. Trustees*, Dockets, ACCP.

¹⁷TM, GHPC, 1 Oct. 1870.

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Contractor: A. J. Drinkhouse, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1890 sanctuary expansion and alterations¹⁸
Lamps and Gas Lights: (1850, 1854, 1856) Cornelius & Baker, Philadelphia; Pennsylvania; (1890) Huber Manufacturing Company¹⁹
Cast Iron Furnace: (1850) Peters & Company
Glazing: (1850) “Mr. Rigers;” (1865) J. G. H. Gibson
Painting: (1851) “Mr. Gibson;” (1854) C. S. Moneder
Bricks and Brickwork: (1852) Arrison & Lingy?; (1854) Charles G. Young
“Fresco Painting:” (1854) E. Werner
Plastering: (1854) James Frazier
Carpentry: (1854) Brown & Early
Wood Carving: (1854) J. H. Otten, W. J. Shaw
Stone Masonry: (1854) A. H. Ransond
Window Staining: (1854) William Denton
Carpets: (1854) James Green & Son; (1890) E. R. Artman & Company²⁰
Morocco: (1854) Gillon & Walton Company, B. D. Stewart
Gas Fitting: (1854) Wright Hunter Company—sanctuary, Arrison & Willard—lecture room
Iron Brackets: (1854) Robert Wood
Lining Pews: (1854) W. J. Shaw; (1890) B. Birnheim²¹
Flannel: (1854) Atwood & Company²²
Organ Rental: (1856) Jason Buffington, Organ Builder
Slating: (1857) W. Graham
Steeple Bell: (1865) American Bell Company, New York, New York
Bell Weights: (1865) D. B. Woodley
Hoisting Tackle for Bell: (1865) J. Edwards
Wallpapering: (1865) Howell & Brown—lecture room

6. Original plans and construction:

Landscape

The institutional antecedents for what became the GHPC were centered in a community known as Francisville. It was platted at a 45° angle to the Philadelphia grid and contained roughly nine blocks aligned with Ridge Road (Avenue).²³ In 1843, Francisville existed as the northernmost developed blocks west of Broad Street. Above Francisville, the landscape retained a

¹⁸BCM, GHPC, 28 May 1890.

¹⁹TM, GHPC, 13 May 1850, 11 Jun. 1855, 9 Jun. 1856; BCM, GHPC, 20 Sep. 1890. Unless otherwise noted, the information regarding persons contracted for supplying or executing work is provided by the Trustees’ Minutes.

²⁰BCM, GHPC, 20 Sep. 1890.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²Congregational Minutes (hereafter CM), GHPC, “Statement Year 1855,” PHS.

²³Charles Ellet, Jr., *A Map of the County of Philadelphia from Actual Survey in Accordance with Act of Assembly Passed June 30, 1839* (Philadelphia: Charles Ellet, Jr., ca. 1843).

bucolic mix of farms, country houses, cemeteries, and irregularly laid-out roads.²⁴ Most higher density development north of the city during the 1840s occurred east of Broad in the Spring Garden District.²⁵

The “rural remoteness” of the land west of Broad allowed for construction of some large institutional structures.²⁶ Within the northern reaches of the Spring Garden District, Eastern State Penitentiary, which fronts Coates Street (Fairmount Avenue), had its perimeter wall and initial cells completed by 1829, only a short distance from Francisville.²⁷

A few blocks to the north, within Penn Township, the original Girard College buildings designed by Thomas U. Walter had been rising on capacious grounds since 1833; construction continued through the end of 1847.²⁸ Founders Hall and its flanking subsidiary buildings faced south onto S. College Avenue. Ridge Road was paved as far as out as Girard College by 1849 as was much of Girard Avenue in the blocks near its intersection with Ridge.²⁹ Records do not reveal whether Girard Avenue between the college and Broad Street was also paved at this time, however it was cleared and graded by 1850 as revealed in a period panoramic view of the college.³⁰ In the decades following, Girard Avenue became an important transportation corridor and fashionable thoroughfare, centered on an increasingly German-dominated population.³¹ Certainly, the location of Girard College enhanced the development potential of the avenue, however because Girard was half-as-much-more broad than nearby parallel streets it could accommodate both the expanding horse car lines, as well as other traffic, running between Broad Street and the Schuylkill River.³²

²⁴See field notes for visual.

²⁵Richard Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved: Catalog of the Historic American Buildings Survey* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976) 287.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 285.

²⁷J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609–1884, vol. III* (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co., 1884) 1835.

²⁸The Penn District was “erected out of Penn Township” by an Act of Assembly on February 26, 1844. The district was enlarged by Act of Assembly on February 17, 1847 and became the 20th Ward under the Act of Consolidation on February 2, 1854.

²⁹Webster, 286., for general about roads; *Commissioners and Inhabitants of the District of Penn vs. James Clark* and *Commissioners and Inhabitants of the District of Penn vs. Michael Deamer*, March term 1849, case numbers 110 and 111, and *Commissioners and Inhabitants of the District of Penn vs. Jacob Peters*, March term 1849, case number 123, Dockets, ACCP, for paving; *Commissioners and Inhabitants of the District of Penn vs. Joseph Cabot*, March term 1850, case number 72 and *Commissioners and Inhabitants of the Penn District vs. Alexander Cummings*, March Term 1851, case number 62, Dockets, ACCP, for piping.

³⁰B. F. Smith, *Philadelphia from Girard College*, 1850, The Library Company of Philadelphia; see field notes for visual.

³¹George E. Thomas, “National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Girard Avenue Historic District,” Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 13 May 1985, item 8.

³²*Ibid.*

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The collection of early institutional structures in the area was further augmented by St. Joseph's Hospital, which was installed in a double house on the south side of Girard Avenue between Sixteenth and Seventeenth Streets purchased by the Sisters of St. Joseph on June 18, 1849.³³ The hospital added a number of more substantial buildings over fifteen years beginning in 1852.³⁴

Thus, in 1847 when the cornerstone was laid for the GHPC, much of the immediate surrounding area—though platted, paved, and growing—remained dominated by an open landscape dotted with large institutions, small commercial crossroads, and country houses.

Building

John Notman provided a second proposal for the church's design on September 30, 1847. No surviving architectural drawings are known, however drawings do exist for Notman's St. Paul's Church in Trenton, New Jersey and for an unnamed Episcopal church all of which bear a close likeness to GHPC's original form and dimensions.³⁵ The design contract for a \$10,000 church was awarded to Notman and the sanctuary was dedicated on December 31, 1848. The interior was not completely finished and furnished until 1854.³⁶

In 1849 before the deed was conveyed to the Trustees, the grounds of the church were augmented by the purchase of ground rents for 7'-10" along the eastern and western sides of the building and obtained outright a 30' x 60' lot at the rear along Walter Street.

Contemporaries described GHPC as "an elegant Gothic edifice" executed in the "Old English style of architecture."³⁷ As completed, GHPC faced south on Girard Avenue and was roughly 45' x 90' including the engaged central tower and the extruded pulpit area on the north. The original façade was three bays wide with the tower entrance flanked by two vestibule windows; the side aisles were added later. The foundations were constructed of rubble stone about 2'-8" thick. Additional support was provided by six simple cast iron columns 7'-3" inches tall topped by roughly hewn woodblock capitals.

³³Scharf, vol. II, 1679; see field notes for visual.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵See field notes for visuals.

³⁶John Notman, drawings 38.1 and 38.2, flank and façade elevations, St. Paul's Church, Trenton, New Jersey, The Athenaeum of Philadelphia; TM, GHPC, 30 Sep. 1847, for plan presentation; TM, GHPC, for interior work completed in 1854.

³⁷*Stranger's Guide in Philadelphia and Its Environs* (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1854) 183, for "Gothic;" Survey No. 182817 (resurvey number 24969 applied on an unspecified date), GHPC, Franklin Fire Insurance Company of Philadelphia (hereafter Insurance), 27 Oct. 1855, HSP, for "Old English;" see field notes for visual.

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These columns carried two summer beams composed of five fused hemlock joists 2½"-3" thick.³⁸

The south entrance façade and the tower were constructed of brownstone blocks laid in ashlar courses of varying widths. Engaged diagonal buttresses articulated the corners of the tower, and the southeast and southwest corners of the building proper. A beveled water table extended across the façade approximately 2'-6" from the ground. The tower was divided into four stages with the first dominated by "folding doors of Oak" over which was placed a pointed-arch stained glass transom, all of which were bordered by a finely carved stone surround detailed with decorative heads and quatrefoils. An expansive window dominated the second stage and was divided into three large trefoil-crowned lancets topped by four smaller lancets. The third stage was pierced by narrow slit windows on the east and west sides. The fourth stage, or belfry, contained four pointed arched openings with tracery divided into two large lancets with trefoil tops and two small lancets above; the large lancets were filled with slate louvers up to the trefoils which, along with the small lancets, contained diamond-paned lights. The tower terminated in a crenellated cornice behind which rose an eight-sided broached spire covered in "planed and painted weatherboarding" and topped by an iron "rod & Vane;" the bottom of the spire was embellished by four small dormers with pointed arched openings that were filled with louvers. On either side of the tower were two pointed arch windows with a similar tracery pattern to the openings in the belfry, but filled entirely with glass. The area along Girard Avenue in front of the church was paved with flagstone.

The north wall was composed of irregular pieces of rubble coursed brownstone and framed by diagonal buttresses at the corners in a manner like that of the south façade. The pulpit extension contained a large window in north wall and two pointed arch windows, one each on the east and west walls; these side windows were set off by brick arches and sills. The eastern and western sanctuary walls were constructed of rubble coursed brownstone with each bay delineated by an engaged buttress composed of more finely executed ashlar coursed brownstone. These bays contained one window each with tracery similar to that of the tower's second stage. These windows also had brick arches and sills. The sash was originally fixed and the glass was initially not stained. The roof was covered with slates and the gutters and downspouts fashioned in "tin."

³⁸While much of the building's original fabric had been lost, altered, or covered, it is possible to reconstruct much of its early state through the 1855 fire insurance policy, the various minutes of the GHPC, an 1859 engraving and two ca. 1870 photographs of GHPC, and review and interpretation of surviving fabric at the site.

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Upon entering, a small vestibule with a flagstone floor was contained within the tower. Staircases on either side of this space accessed the lecture and school rooms below the sanctuary and the gallery above. These stairs were simply articulated on the basement level, and crafted with oak newel posts and handrails, and maple balusters as they rose to the gallery level. On this level, arched openings on each side led to both the sanctuary gallery and to a wooden platform dividing the tower at the second stage, allowing access to a steep stair which led to a trap door at the third stage. At ground level, three pointed arch openings accessed the sanctuary from the main and stair vestibules—the central one being of double width.

Much of the sanctuary's interior remained unfinished when the church was dedicated in 1848. The carved wood trim might have been installed in a more timely manner had a late night fire not destroyed "the lumber...all prepared upon the ground for the interior work" shortly after exterior walls were completed.³⁹ As dedicated, four open rafters supported the roof over the sanctuary and corresponded with the exterior buttresses, with two smaller rafters placed flush against the north and south walls. On October 7, 1850 the Trustees were "authorized to make such alterations to the Roof of the Church as they may deem necessary for the comfort of the Congregation."⁴⁰ These alterations probably refer to two skylights located near the edge of the roof in the southernmost sanctuary bay on both the east and west sides. This operable glazing provided much needed ventilation for the church's choir gallery.

A choir gallery located at the rear of the church extended 16' from the south interior wall into the sanctuary. It was accessed by two pointed arch doorways and lit by a large window opening onto the second stage of the vestibule-tower. The gallery might well have been entirely completed under Notman's tenure, as there is no mention of work on the space during the 1854 finishing work and it was in use by the early 1850s. The gallery was later described as "supported with cluster columns of wood with gothic arches sprung between." The interior walls may have been devoid of plaster at this time, the window sash was fixed and not stained, and the side aisles were carpeted. Pews may have been extant, however their decorative ends remained uncarved until 1854. The interior was lit by lamps, probably oil or kerosene, purchased from Cornelius and Baker. The pulpit area also remained unfinished, however a stair at the rear of the space led to a "study" below which was lighted by two windows.

The basement was finished into two rooms—lathed, plastered, and trimmed with 3' wainscoting—for use as a Sunday school and lecture hall; a plank

³⁹*Manual*, 19.

⁴⁰TM, GHPC, 7 Oct. 1857.

floor was raised 1'-6" above the ground. These rooms contained five windows with iron frames and sash on each side. A cast iron furnace located on the north end of the basement area heated the building. In 1852, "suitable privies" were constructed on church grounds though whether these were incorporated into the building remains unclear.⁴¹

7. Alterations and additions:

1854—Much of the sanctuary's initial interior embellishment dates from this year. In that year, the congregation's first pastor departed and the church was "vacant" or without a reverend for ten months.⁴² During the period, the congregation "expended about twenty-five hundred dollars in making the house more commodious and comfortable."⁴³ The [re]finished church was rededicated on November 26, 1854 with Reverend Thomas Brainerd presiding.⁴⁴

In "making the house more commodious and comfortable," the walls were plastered, painted, and "frescoed." The term "fresco" in this case refers to extensive plaster relief and trompe l'oeil decoration throughout the church. A ca. 1870 interior photograph documents the elaborate painting that most likely was the sum result of both the documented 1854 and the later 1864 fresco work.⁴⁵ The north-facing view reveals that the north wall of the sanctuary was plastered with incised lines to mimic ashlar courses. The large pointed arch opening into the pulpit area was embellished with a trompe l'oeil "stone" ogee arch with decorative bosses. Most suprisingly, the rear wall of the pulpit area contained a forced one-point perspective architectural fantasy depicting five receding bays of a gothic cathedral. The view contains a perpendicular gothic vaulting system terminating in a characteristically English flat "east end" pierced by a large pointed-arch window. This architectural perspective illusionistically reflects English building tradition in which sections of ecclesiastical edifices were often constructed in different epochs and in different period modes. Along the side walls, ten plaster pointed-arch recesses further set off by painted hoods contained the windows. Trompe l'oeil subsidiary rafters and purlins filled the ceiling bays between the dark-stained principal rafters whose ends of which were carved into decorative bosses; small gargoyles hovered in the northernmost principal rafter ends. A painted frieze extended between the rafters at the intersection of the arched ceiling and the sanctuary's side walls.

⁴¹TM, GHPC, 10 Jul. 1852.

⁴²Church Register, GHPC, 1847-1906, PHS.

⁴³*Manual*, 20.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵See field notes for visual.

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During this period of interior finishing, a great deal of woodwork was completed. The 2'-9" planed wainscoting under the windows along the side walls was executed. Wood carvers were hired to fashion scrolls on the pew ends. The pews numbered twenty-six along each side aisle and each side of the center aisle, and sat on wooden platforms raised four inches above the carpeted aisles.⁴⁶ Four additional pews were located on either side of the pulpit. All of the pews were lined with new cushions. The area within the pulpit was finished with a platform raised four feet above the sanctuary floor, reached by two staircases, and fronted by "sunk gothic panels." The preaching lectern was octagonal in shape and the walls and ceiling were plastered.

At this time, the church was plumbed for gas and new gas fixtures ordered, including six globes for the pulpit area. The windows, covered with drapes since 1851 to block the glaring sun, were stained. One year later, an organ was rented and installed in the rear choir gallery.⁴⁷

1856—The grounds on the west side of the church were filled, graded, fenced, and paved along Girard Avenue. Though the changes may have been post-1856, a ca. 1870 view of the church shows this area enclosed by a rusticated stone wall topped with an ornate iron balustrade and a gate along Girard Avenue, with a more simple iron fence separating the area from a gated walk on the west side of the church building.

1857—The lecture and Sunday school rooms in the basement were refinished on the request of the Trustees "to devise some plan whereby the Lecture Room could be made dryer, and more comfortable." Alterations included new window frames and sash, new lath and plaster on the walls, new heaters, and the introduction of closets. The staircase leading up to the sanctuary from the "study" under the pulpit section of the church was removed.⁴⁸

1864—Numerous "Alterations & repair[s] of the upper portion of the Church edifice" were made. Bills for materials and work completed included: carpentry, plastering, stained glass, damask, painting and "Fresco" painting, chairs, slate work, upholstery, gas fixtures, "tin work," and carpets.⁴⁹

One year later, a bell was finally ordered for the tower from the American Bell Company in New York. Not long after its installation, "some 4 or 5 persons procured the key of the church, and rang the bell in such a violent

⁴⁶See field notes for visual.

⁴⁷TM, GHPC, 12 May 1856.

⁴⁸TM, GHPC, 9 Mar. 1857, for quote; Insurance, 28 Nov. 1857.

⁴⁹CM, GHPC, 1 Oct. 1864.

manner, as to cause the breaking of the same [bell];” a new bell was immediately ordered.⁵⁰

1870—While not resulting in any major physical change to the church structure, a two-story brick building for the Sunday school was constructed on the northern edge of the church grounds. It was built flush against the sanctuary and obscured the original northern exterior wall, the top of the gable excepting. Two windows in the extruded northern (pulpit) area were probably filled at this time.

1879—After much deliberation as to the necessary extent of the desired changes, the Trustees’ ruled that it was “inexpedient to enlarge the building at this time.” However, they did appropriate \$4,000 dollars for “improvements and repairs” to the sanctuary. These changes included a subtle sloping of the floor downwards toward the pulpit, about a 2” total drop. New walnut pews “circular in form” replaced the original straight ones.⁵¹ The original pulpit and north end were rebuilt. The organ and choir were moved from the gallery into the northern extension. This choir area was encircled by gothicizing paneling and fronted by a new pulpit area raised 2’-7” above the floor, similarly paneled, with a new lectern. A doorway was cut to the right of the choir onto the landing of the Sunday school stairs and matching false door was applied to the left side of the choir, thus maintaining symmetry.⁵² A second door was opened onto the school landing which led to the new choir area.

In November 1879, “the alterations and improvements having been completed,” a dedicatory sermon was given by Reverend George F. Wiswell, the churches pastor, to mark the sanctuary’s reopening.⁵³

1890—As early as 1859, discussion of the building’s expansion or replacement was being entertained. “The question of enlarging the building is already discussed, and it is confidently hoped that, before much time has elapsed, a church edifice capable of seating at least a thousand persons, will occupy the place of the present structure.”⁵⁴ The issue was regularly addressed from that time forward, but was not a feasible option until 1890. From its earliest days, the GHPC wrestled with a never-ending series of financial snafus. It was not until the 1880s, that the church found itself “free of debt” which had no doubt previously restricted their ability to see ambitious expansion plans through to fruition.⁵⁵

⁵⁰TM, GHPC, 30 Apr. 1865, for the bell breaking; TM, GHPC, 4 May 1865, for new bell.

⁵¹See field notes for visual.

⁵²TM, GHPC, 7 May 1879, for quotes and appropriation; Insurance, 22 Nov. 1879.

⁵³Thompson Westcott Scrapbooks, vol. 1880–1882, 1, HSP.

⁵⁴*Manual*, 22.

⁵⁵CM, GHPC, 15 Apr. 1878; TM, GHPC, for financial information.

On April 23, 1890, the GHPC Building Committee passed resolutions allowing for the church's enlargement and the formation of a new mortgage. The Committee immediately and unanimously accepted all of the plans save for the south elevation, forwarded by Trustee Samuel Gourley on May 1, 1890. A. J. Drinkhouse was soon awarded the contract for executing what amounted to \$7500 worth of changes. Reservations about the façade elevation, or perhaps all of the design schemes, might have resulted in the Building Committee seeking out "the opinion of one of Philadelphias (sic) most prominent and thorough Architects, who endorses in every particularity the plan adopted."⁵⁶

The expansion and alterations to the church occurred during the summer of 1890 and by September and October finishing work on the interior was being contracted.⁵⁷ New aisles running the length of the church on both the west and east sides were constructed measuring 8'-10½" from the center of the new support columns to the interior walls. Each new aisle bay was additionally lighted by one rectangular skylight, with a total of ten. The south elevation was expanded to five bays with new end sections set off by pairs of front facing engaged buttresses and small parapet gables topped by filigreed iron crosses.⁵⁸ The original stone walls along the flanks were replaced with ones of brick, carried on rubble stone foundations running parallel to the earlier foundation walls. The northern walls of the new aisles were constructed of rubble coursed brownstone. Ten clerestory window dormers, one per bay on each side of the church, were completed at this time. The removal of the original side walls and insertion of the clerestory dormers, coupled with the 1879 move of the organ and choir to the pulpit area, were successive steps in eliminating the trompe l'oeil decoration visible in the ca. 1870 view.

The four free principal rafters and new timber and plaster clerestory walls and tudor arches were carried on eight fluted iron columns with abstracted lotiform capitals that were cast as single units. Iron tie rods were strapped to the rafters, east to west across the sanctuary; their installation was a source of heated debate. However, the "prominent and thorough" local architect contacted for his opinion about the general church extension plans definitively ended the debate when he purportedly commented: "they are essential to the stability of the structure."⁵⁹ The curved pews from 1879 were increased in number and a new arrangement of three pew groupings

⁵⁶BCM, GHPC, 23 Apr. 1878, 1 May 1890, 28 May 1890, 17 Jun. 1890.

⁵⁷See field notes for visual.

⁵⁸See field notes for visual.

⁵⁹BCM, GHPC, 17 Jun. 1890.

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with no center aisle adopted.⁶⁰ At the rear of the sanctuary, the gallery was removed and the two access stairs in the east and west vestibules taken out.

Two doorways on the church's façade were constructed to the east and west of the original vestibule and stair areas; the narrow double doors contained large and small decorative glazed panels. Each new vestibule was lighted by a double lancet stained glass window cut into the side walls and also had access to the church proper, increasing the number of portals opening onto the sanctuary to five. The wooden window tracery for the ten sanctuary windows was saved and reused in the new side walls and filled with rich, polychromed diamond panes. New carpet, gas chandeliers and sconces, pew cushions, and a gilded weather vane were also installed. The center doors of the vestibule were veneered and the walls of the church "frescoed" again, probably just with incised plaster rather than extensive trompe l'oeil painting.⁶¹

20th Century—Early in the century, the entrance vestibules dating from the 1890 side aisle extensions had their exterior and sanctuary points of access permanently closed and two bathrooms were installed. Electricity was introduced some time in the 1910s.

The stained glass in the south façade and tower windows, in the three vestibule portal transoms, the window on the sanctuary's south wall, and all of the large sanctuary windows was all replaced, perhaps after the 1923 congregation merger. The highly polychromed diamond-shaped lights gave way to amber colored rectangular lights accented by roundels carrying religious symbols.

By 1947, the steeple and crenellated tower cornice had been removed; the interior walls, ceiling, and rafters were whitewashed, and fluorescent lighting installed.⁶²

B. Historical Context

The Presbyterian Divide

The foundation of the Green Hill Presbyterian Church was intimately tied to the formal Presbyterian schism spanning from 1838 to 1869. The First Presbytery, or a "local" meeting of church elders, convened in Philadelphia in 1706 and included seven ministers total from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia.⁶³ As the Presbyterian Church gained strength in the colonies, the number of presbyteries

⁶⁰See field notes for visual.

⁶¹BCM, GHPC, 20 Sep. 1890, 4 Oct 1890.

⁶²A. Galbraith, Jr., survey for policy number 13998, Girard Ave.-Welsh Presbyterian Church, Mutual Assurance Society, 23 Mar. 1948, HSP.

⁶³Hammonds, 18.

expanded and represented smaller geographic areas. While the First Great Awakening in the 1730s and 1740s caused theological strife for the Presbyterians, they were able to overcome differences and avoided a split. In 1801 under the Plan of Union, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America entered into a loose confederation with the Congregationalists of western New York and the West (Midwest).⁶⁴

The three decades after the Plan of Union saw increasing evangelical fervor among almost all Christian sects; this fervor crossed denominational lines for the purposes of missionary work, abolition of slavery, and social reform.⁶⁵ The majority of the most zealous revivalism in what became known as the Second Great Awakening occurred in the West (Midwest) under such fiery and mesmerizing preachers as Charles G. Finney. Finney and other evangelical reverends reacted against orthodox theology and intellectual traditions perceived in all Protestant denominations. These preachers “denied the implicit authority of learning, mocked the importance of carefully crafted sermons...and decried the detached and dignified style of educated ministers—[they] railed at ecclesiastical bureaucracy.”⁶⁶ While these “anti-intellectual” generalizations, in large part held true among the Baptists and Methodists who excitedly embraced the emotional fervor of the camp revival, many of the churches “with strong theological traditions” and relatively robust histories in America—the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Lutherans—“tended to remain intellectually based at some level.”⁶⁷ The adherence to more orthodox theologies did not necessarily split along denominational lines and each group dealt with varying degrees of internal strife, strife which rendered a chasm in the Presbyterian Church over the course of the 1830s.

The rise in evangelical fervor among Presbyterians was not total and “Old School Presbyterians” found the “crude and vernacular speech,” propaganda and soul-saving techniques, informality, and coed “frenzied religious meetings” offensive.⁶⁸ The division between “Old School” and “New School” Presbyterians was never more evident than during the annual General Assembly meetings held in Philadelphia.

In 1831, the Old School dominated the Assembly and put Philadelphia New School pastor Albert Barnes of the First Presbyterian Church on trial for heresy, a charge of which he was eventually acquitted.⁶⁹ The next six years found much protest between

⁶⁴S.R. Pointer, “New School Presbyterians,” *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, eds. Daniel G. Reid, Robert D. Linder, Bruce L. Shelley, Harry S. Stout (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990) 819.

⁶⁵George M. Marsden, *The Evangelical Minds and the New School Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970) 3.

⁶⁶Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) 197.

⁶⁷Marsden, 5.

⁶⁸Hatch, 196.

⁶⁹Pointer, 820.

the two sects. At the 1837 General Assembly, the mutual derision led to Old School elders proposing a separation of the groups whereby they would retain the name “Presbyterian Church in the United States of America” and the New School congregants would become the “American Presbyterian Church;” the New School participants soundly rejected the proposal.⁷⁰ In reaction to this decision, the numerically dominant Old School participants dissolved the 1801 Plan of Union, which ultimately dismantled 28 New School presbyteries, removing 509 ministers and 60,000 communicants from the church.⁷¹ Despite these events, a formal split did not occur until May 1838 when the New School General Assembly participants walked out of the mayhem-filled joint session. Both the New and Old School met independently for the next thirty-one years, each as the “General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.” In 1869, overtures for reunification were made and in 1870 the two sects were formally reconciled.

Religious Development in Districts North of Philadelphia

In September 1826, Charles Brown and John Summers began leading a Sunday school and prayer meeting in Francisville, in the Spring Garden District.⁷² While they had no denominational affiliation at the time, their ministry grew in popularity and infamy.

These meetings grew in character and influence until the whole village [Francisville] was effected by them. They, as well as the Sabbath school, encountered much opposition. Men, infidel in sentiment and wicked in practice, did all their power to counteract the influence now so widely prevailing.⁷³

After years of holding classes and meetings in private houses and borrowed spaces, the school moved into their own “small frame building” constructed in 1833 at the corner of Powell (Perkiomen) and Vineyard streets, later known as the “Old Frame.”⁷⁴

In May 1843, Thomas Brainerd, the noted New School pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church on Pine Street purchased a house the vicinity of Girard Avenue in an effort to counter persistent poor health.⁷⁵ Brainerd was well known and respected in the Presbyterian Church and was a close “associate” of Reverend Albert Barnes who was targeted in the 1831 heresy trial.⁷⁶ A few months later, the

⁷⁰Marsden, 62.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 63.

⁷²*Manual*, 9.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 10.

⁷⁴Alfred Nevin, *History of the Presbytery of Philadelphia and of the Philadelphia Central* (Philadelphia: W. S. Fortescue & Co, 1888) 131; see field notes for visual.

⁷⁵Brainerd, 186.

⁷⁶Marsden, 201.

nondenominational school/prayer meeting in Francisville petitioned the (New School) Third Presbytery of Philadelphia “to supply the place with regular services.”⁷⁷ Whether Brainerd acted on or was inspired by this petition is not clear. Regardless, both the biographical data on Brainerd and the GHPC history point to him as the primary motivator and organizer of the church.

At the time there was no Presbyterian church near...
his [Brainerd’s] residence...Dr. Brainerd saw the necessity
of forming a Presbyterian church in the north-west part
of the city, and the Sabbath-school established in the “Old
Frame,” serving as a basis of operation, he applied himself
to the work of organizing and building up such a church.⁷⁸

Brainerd presided at the December 27, 1846 ceremony when Green Hill Presbyterian Church “was constituted with eight members...in the frame chapel.”⁷⁹ The name “Green Hill” referred to the general vicinity of Girard Avenue at Sixteenth Street and stemmed from a much older place name associated with the Meredith family’s eighteenth-century country estate known as “Green Hill.”⁸⁰ On April 13, 1847, the GHPC was received by the Fourth Presbytery of Philadelphia.⁸¹ This New School Presbytery had held its own inaugural meeting less than two years before on November 11, 1845 under the direction of Reverend Albert Barnes and initially included 22 ministers, 20 churches, and 4,718 communicants.⁸²

Significantly, Green Hill Presbyterian Church, whose own isolated beginnings were located in a somewhat controversial independent prayer meeting, was directly linked to two major New School leaders. The founding of GHPC seems to have fulfilled both the needs of a small independent congregation probably moved by the fervor of the Second Great Awakening, as well as a motivated New School Presbyterian leader. Philadelphia had essentially become the locus of Presbyterianism in the United States and competition between the two sects was especially fierce there. After a few years of New School numerical dominance, both the New and Old Schools counted thirty-two local churches in 1846, the year of GHPC’s formation.⁸³ By 1849, the Old School numbered thirty-six churches to the New School’s thirty four.⁸⁴ In that year, the general competition between sects became localized in the Penn District with the (Old School) Presbytery of Philadelphia establishing the Penn

⁷⁷*Manual*, 13.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 15.

⁷⁹Nevin, 131; see field notes for visual.

⁸⁰“Green Hill: The Seat of Samuel Meredith Esq. near Philadelphia, 1789,” Philadelphia Scrapbook Compiled by Samuel Castner, Print and Pictures Division, Free Library of Philadelphia, vol. 4, 79.

⁸¹*Manual*, 16.

⁸²Hammonds, 24.

⁸³*Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, New School, (New York, 1846) 86–88; *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, Old School (Philadelphia, 1846) 470.

⁸⁴New School, 1849, 251–252; Old School, 1849, 114.

Presbyterian Church on North Tenth Street seven blocks east of GHPC, just south of Girard Avenue.⁸⁵

Reverend Brainerd, still residing in the area, and Dr. Arnold Naudain, one of the first church elders, unsuccessfully canvassed the area for donations to begin construction on the sanctuary.⁸⁶ The GHPC “though now organized into a church, was feeble and without means, so that he [Brainerd] was obliged to depend almost entirely upon friends in other parts of the city.”⁸⁷ Ultimately, Brainerd raised \$6000 dollars for the building; a good portion coming from colleagues he invited to a “pastoral tea” held at his Green Hill dwelling; nearly \$1500 dollars came from his own Pine Street congregation.⁸⁸

Brainerd’s persistence paid-off as less than one year after the GHPC’s formation, they were able to contract John Notman for the design of their sanctuary on a site along Girard Avenue. While Notman had earlier provided plans for the Church of the Ascension façade in Philadelphia (1846–1850) and had already completed a number of churches in New Jersey, GHPC was his first fully executed ecclesiastical structure in the Philadelphia area.⁸⁹ Interestingly, the edifice, as it was originally configured, bore close resemblance with other roughly contemporary churches—indicating that perhaps he had a standard design for a “small church” which could be easily modified—spatially and stylistically—as needed.⁹⁰ Regardless of the genesis for the design, on November 8, 1847, Notman’s revised plan for the new sanctuary was accepted by the congregation.

A few months later, a formal Commonwealth charter for the church’s organization was written and passed on February 7, 1848.⁹¹ Those church members noted in the charter appear to have come from mixed backgrounds and included a “gentleman,” a stock broker, a doctor, a grocer, two carpenters, and a cordwainer.⁹² An interesting feature of the charter regarded voting privileges for church elections. The stipulations did not discriminate by gender and a person needed only to pay for a pew or donate money for the minister’s support, be 18 (women) and 21 (men), and a citizen of Pennsylvania. Furthermore, while the seven Trustees were all male, seven women congregants signed the charter. Thus, the participatory structure of the GHPC reflected New School ideals in more than just theology. Whether the GHPC remained what might be described as a “liberal” dissenter congregation is not clear. It has been argued that generally after the 1838 denominational split, the New School Presbyterians froze their theological doctrine in an attempt to legitimize their sect—

⁸⁵Hammonds, 79, for foundation dates; White, 90, for location; see field notes for visual.

⁸⁶*Manual*, 16.

⁸⁷Brainerd, 188.

⁸⁸*Manual*, 16.

⁸⁹Greiff, (7).

⁹⁰See field notes for visual.

⁹¹Charter, GHPC, 7 Feb. 1848, PHS.

⁹²*Boyd’s Philadelphia City Directory*, 1848, for occupation of charter signers.

the high water point for religious “innovation” may well have passed before the GHPC was chartered.⁹³

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION⁹⁴

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Green Hill Presbyterian Church is representative of nineteenth-century Gothic revival architecture in the United States and combines a more archaeological take visible in surviving portions of the original building with a freer interpretation of the Gothic idiom evident in the 1890s expansion and alterations.
2. Condition of fabric: Decaying.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: approximately 61' x 90'. The building is one-and-one half stories with one-story side aisles and a full basement. The five part south façade addressing Girard Avenue is centered on an engaged, multi-stage tower.
2. Foundations: The walls are composed of rubble stone and are approximately 2'-8" thick. On the east and west sides of the building there is a second, parallel rubble stone foundation wall necessary for the 1890 side aisle additions.
3. Walls:
South Elevation: The wall, engaged buttresses, and tower are composed of ashlar coursed brownstone arranged in bands of varying widths. The two outside (later) bays are set off by pairs of front-facing engaged buttresses with parapet gables masking the lower aisle height behind. One filigreed iron cross survives over the eastern gable. The tower portal is delimited by a finely carved brownstone surround detailed with decorative heads and quatrefoils. The windows and belfry openings are topped by shallow stone hoods and the lintels and sills are beveled. A beveled water table extends across the front of the church about 2'-6" from the ground.

East and West Elevations: The lower walls are composed of rubble coursed brownstone up to the sill line; the brownstone sills and water table have beveled finishes. The walls above this line are red brick essentially laid-up in American bond, though every eighth course is made up of alternating

⁹³Pointer, 820.

⁹⁴Summer 2000 photographs of the Green Hill Presbyterian Church are located in the field notes file.

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headers and stretchers. Just below the roofline, a decorative brick corbelled cornice extends the length of the east and west walls and it topped by a rounded wood band. A brick chimneystack extends upward from the western wall between the first and second sanctuary bays from the south.

North Elevation: Now entirely obscured by the 1870 auxiliary building, the rear wall is composed of rubble coursed brownstone less carefully cut and laid up than that in the original side walls.

4. Structural systems, framing: Load-bearing stone—north and south walls, and load-bearing brick—east and west walls. The roof is carried on six principal rafters with supplemental iron tie rods strapped east to west across the sanctuary, end to end. The floor consists of oak tongue-and-groove planking.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The tower portal is highlighted by a finely carved brownstone surround, containing double doors (the original oak doors, veneered during the 1890 renovations) and a back-lighted metal sign with “Girard Avenue Presbyterian Church” cut out. Beyond these doors is a 3'-6" deep vestibule with glazed and paneled doors and sidelights. The space is ceiled with beaded tongue-and-groove boarding; a band of square and rectangular stained glass panels approximately 3" tall provide a narrow transom. The eastern and western portals on the façade originally contained a set of narrow, glazed double doors that are now covered. These doors were permanently closed sometime early in the twentieth century when bathrooms were installed behind them.

The original three portals accessing the sanctuary from the vestibule are set into plaster arched recesses. These openings were originally topped by transoms with stained lights and contained hinged doors that are not extant. The extreme eastern and western portals opening onto the side aisles were closed-up when the vestibule bathrooms were added. At the gallery level, four portals, two in the southern sanctuary wall and two opening between the tower and the adjacent vestibule/former stair areas have all been plastered over. On the north wall east of the pulpit, a small door opens onto the stair landing of the school building beyond; a matching non-functional door is located west of the pulpit in order to maintain symmetry. Another door on the stair landing accessed the northern choir area, but is now sealed.

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- b. Windows: With the exception, perhaps, of the large window on the south sanctuary wall opening onto the tower, the clerestory dormer windows, and the new side vestibule windows, all of the church's windows contain the original wooden gothic tracery; the interior wooden sills are beveled. The present stained glass probably dates from the 1920s. Traces of the 1890 glass program survive in the small window on the western side wall visible in the bathroom. With the exception of the clerestory dormers and bathroom window, the windows are filled with pale colored rectangular lights with leaded mullions; the large lancets have a narrow polychrome border around the outside. The three-lancet windows contain a roundel depicting a religious symbol in the center lancet; this section also contains operable iron sash that tips inward when open. The two-lancet windows contain symbolic roundels in both sections. The clerestory dormers are composed of three rectangular sections filled with vibrantly colored glass delineating three lancets of equal size; the center panel has operable iron sash. The center portal accessing the church from the tower vestibule is topped by a pointed transom filled with similar rectangular, leaded glass. Two transoms above the smaller vestibule portals in the south wall, now devoid of glass, presumably were similarly filled.

Five rectangular skylights over each of the side aisles have since been closed and the interior openings now house fluorescent tubes and coverings.

6. Roof: The main sanctuary roof is double pitched and slated. The dormer and side aisle roofs, originally sheathed in "tin," are now covered with asphalt sheeting.
- C. Description of Interior:
1. Schematic diagrams of the church's original and later interior configurations are included in the field notes. While aspects of the church's early interior finishing remain, it has been repeatedly changed since its completion. Its current state most reflects aspects of the 1879, 1890, and mid-twentieth century interior changes.
 2. Flooring: oak; sanctuary floor slopes forward towards the pulpit area with a difference of approximately 2'-1" between the front and rear sections of the sanctuary.
 3. Wall and ceiling finish: plaster walls and ceiling, most recently painted white. The interior walls are wainscoted in walnut to a height of 2'-7" above floor level at the church's rear and 4'-8" at the front. Traces of incised plaster

survive in the vestibule and on the north and south sanctuary walls. The tower and flanking vestibule spaces contain dropped ceilings sheathed with drywall.

4. Trim and woodwork: The 1879 walnut pulpit and choir front remain and are in excellent condition, as do the 1879/1890 pews. Unpainted walnut wainscoting survives along the interior walls. The open rafters have been painted white and six square fluorescent lights installed at the apex of the sanctuary ceiling.
5. Mechanical: At least three generations of heating grates exist in the church along the eastern and western walls and in the side aisle floors; all three indicate forced air circulation. In 1892, new heating and ventilation ducts/grates were installed and comprised “a system to give a continuous supply of fresh air to the room, a method to draw foul air out of the room also a method to preheat the air in the room continuously by passing through the furnace.”⁹⁵ A 1948 insurance survey notes the building contained “three pipeless hot air heating plants” and “two portable hot air furnaces.”⁹⁶ The make-up of the present system is not discernible.

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⁹⁵TM, GHPC, 1 Jun. 1892.

⁹⁶Galbraith.

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PART IV: PROJECT INFORMATION

The documentation of Green Hill Presbyterian Church was undertaken during the summer of 2000 as part of a larger program to record historic landmarks and historically significant structures in North Philadelphia. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), E. Blaine Cliver, Chief of HABS/HAER, and Paul D. Dolinsky, Chief of HABS; funding was made possible through a congressional appropriation for documentation in Southeastern Pennsylvania and supplemented by a William Penn Foundation grant to the Foundation for Architecture for educational purposes. The project was planned and administered by HABS historian Catherine C. Lavoie and HABS architect Robert R. Arzola. The project historian was James A. Jacobs (George Washington University). Large format photography was undertaken by Joseph Elliott. The measured drawings were completed by a team of architects: Project Supervisor Matthew Crawford (The School of the Art Institute of Chicago), architectural

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technicians Kwesi Daniels (Tuskegee University), Caroline LaVerne Wright (Tulane University), and Kenneth William Horrigan (ICOMOS-Sydney, Australia).